Elena's Mounting Stress and the Looming Invasion of Avalor

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by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Elena is on edge. She is unsure whether her dictate to restrict movement into and out of Avalor City, disaster preparedness plans, and other measures are worth it. Stressed out, she doesn't even know if the supposed incursion against her queendom will happen at all. After her wife, Naomi, comforts her, and they eat breakfast together, their tranquility is shattered when a massive armada of steam-powered machines arrives in the skies above. Will she, the Royal Guard, her newfound friends, soldiers from nearby kingdoms, and other allies be able to stop the onslaught? Or will they fall victim to the Arch-Druidess, the handmaiden of Alva Gunderson?

Notes

This one took a while to write, partly because I wanted to write the one for my related series "Alva's Unbridled Rage and the Steam of Revolution" but once I got a grove down, it really worked! I'll try to keep a better schedule for the next one, which hopefully will be out by the end of the month, or earlier next month, if all goes well. Slowly I'm moving forward in this story and toward the battle, which will be in the next section of this series. As always, comments, suggestions, and constructive criticism are welcome.

Update on 12/13/24: This fic has been cross-posted on Squidge World. The revisions to the text here have been posted here as well.

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by [Restricted Work] by avatar_dragon_rider

A month had passed since Elena had put Avalor City on a lockdown and restricted movement of its citizens. The city had become *more* militarized. Royal guards patrolled day and night, marching down the streets. They stood guard at checkpoints at major thoroughfares and roads that led out of the city. At the port, all ships coming in, and out, were c*hecked* for weapons or other contraband. All citizens were encouraged to contribute food and supplies to safe houses which would be used in an extreme emergency. These measures *may* have seemed extreme, but Elena felt they were necessary to prepare for the coming assault. Although she had absolute power as the sovereign, she *still* consulted the Grand Council. Its members, now consisting of Francisco, Luisa, Mateo, Isa, and Naomi, *begrudgingly* agreed with her methods. The latter two were new additions to the council.

Although he would been an immense help, Mateo had left on a *personal spiritual journey* to visit wise mages in the mountains of a far-away kingdom. He had been nervous about leaving, but Elena told him that they had the situation under control, and *he believed her*. As for Adora, Catra, Zarya, and Kitty, they stayed inside the palace, but were growing tired with being cooped up inside.

Early in the morning, the sun shone through the open window and onto Naomi's pale pink skin. She yawned, stretched, and touched Elena’s head. She softly whispered, "time to wake up, sleepyhead."

Elena smiled. Even after all these years, she *still couldn't believe* she married such a nice, kind person, and that her grandparents had been OK with it. In fact, they had *fully* supported their marriage, as had Naomi's parents.

"Nomes, thanks. Let's get some breakfast…then I have something I’d like to talk with you about."

Naomi nodded. She was growing concerned with Elena, who seemed more stressed out than ever. She rarely left the palace anymore, only on special occasions, delegating others to carry out her tasks. It seemed that the palace was as a prison of sorts for her. This worried Naomi. She held Elena's hand tightly. Closing the door of their shared room, they walked down the stairs, together.

Sitting on the table in a room off the kitchen, were bottles of aqua frescas with a flavor of anoki berries and carefully prepared veggie burritos. Plantations outside the city grew anoki berries. Restrictions imposed by Elena meant that the only ones available were those picked by jaquins in Vallestrella. So, Naomi and Elena were lucky to have them at all. If Adora, Catra, Kitty, or Zarya had been there, it would have been different. All of them would have had a grand old time, munching on the food, and enjoying themselves. This time, they had some peace and quiet while those adorable rabblerousers slept soundly in another part of the palace. The same could be said about Elena’s grandparents. Francisco, and Luisa could be in a deep, comfortable slumber, no matter how much noise was outside the palace walls, or in the building itself.

Sitting down a wooden chair next to her wife, Elena groaned. Naomi began chewing on a burrito. She eagerly awaited her wife's explanation. She soon found out why Elena had been

so stressed and worried.

"Nomes, I feel like I am stretched thin. I don't even know if what I'm doing to restrict movement in Avalor City is even worth it. Will Steamland ever attack at all?"

Naomi hugged Elena and stroked her hair. The last thing she wanted was for her wife to feel like this. She tried to be understanding, comforting her the way she always had.

"You are doing this for Avalor. You are strong, the strongest woman I know."

She proposed a solution of sorts which seemed a bit out there.

"If those steam-powered jerks don't come here *soon*, lift the restrictions, apologize, and leave Avalor *for a bit*…you know, for your mental health."

Elena pondered it over. She hadn't thought of leaving a place she was born, grew up, and lived most of her life for a prolonged period. It would be a *big decision* for sure, as she would have to leave everyone she knew behind, at least for a while. Scratching her chin, she responded. "I'll think about it, Nomes."

She had a qualifier, something her wife had expected. "I want to make sure Avalor is not in danger. *One more week* of this, then I'll end it…I'll do what you ask."

Naomi smiled. She was glad that Elena seemed in more of a chipper mood.

It was *happy bliss*. Naomi and Elena were enjoying eating burritos, drank their aqua frescas, and eating some scrumptious cookies. This did not last. A little groggy and still in her sleeping clothes, Elena walked toward the doors which opened to a courtyard with a lovely fountain. Migs appeared in front of her. He looked at her with terror.

"Elena, we have a big problem…*THEY* are coming!!"

Rubbing her eyes to see if Migs was there, she realized it was all real. She had woken up.

"Migs, what is it? Who is they?"

Migs bit his paw. He nervously uttered, "…a bunch of whirring machines…they sounded like the loudest thing I've ever heard…one even whooshed at me and I got a face-full of steam."

He began mouthing some of the sounds. Elena couldn't believe her ears. *Was this really an invasion? Were they from Steamland?* Those were her first thoughts. While it was only a hunch, she knew they had to immediately respond. There was no time for an emergency meeting of the Grand Council, as much as she would use and *need* their advice.

She spoke to Migs softly, ordering him to "execute Operation PREECF." He nodded.

He first told those inside the royal palace's main building, then those outside the palace grounds, about the impending danger. This *included* Zarya and Kitty, who had been practicing combat training late into the night. Adora was bleary-eyed from partying with Catra, in popular underground club in Avalor City, the *Meow's Delight*, the previous night.

Although they shouldn't have been partying before a battle, as it is always said, hindsight is 20-20. He decided to not wake Francisco and Luisa. He did not want them to be hurt. He was, also, unsure of what they could do to fight mechanical monstrosities, especially since they had no magical powers.

After informing those in the palace's central building of the impending danger, he sauntered over to the Royal Avaloran Archives. He told them of the same, so they could prepare themselves for the inevitable. It was one of the most important places in Avalor. Information on people across the queendom was stored there. This included family genealogies, papers on myths and legends, government records, and other assorted records. All these chronicled the history of this beautiful land. During all the years the files had been stored there, citizens had never tampered with the archives, and they had been kept under lock and key. This was for good reason. During the 41-year-rule of the wicked Shuriki, who murdered King Raul and Queen Lucia, Elena's parents, the archives were ransacked by this evil queen and her minions.

Sitting at the information desk, the archivist yawned. He pulled a lever. It first activated a set of bells which rang across the building, informing the staff of the impending emergency. Then, he pushed a petal with his foot. It fired a ball at an extreme velocity. This triggered a secret elevator. This elevator slowly moved all the archival collections in the stacks two floors below to the sub-basement. After that, all the staff locked their hands, and did a little jig, humming the anthem of the archives, which they had composed themselves. The movement caused the final stage of the plan to execute. Metal sheets came down from the building's dome and covered the whole building from top to bottom. This ensured the building wouldn't be destroyed or severely damaged.

After this, Professor Diamante cleared her throat. She announced "now, please go the designated safe room. Thank you for your cooperation."

Knowing this was serious, everyone complied. *No one* wanted to be maimed by whatever flying machines were out there ready to ravage Avalor City. The safe room was stocked with necessary supplies, like food and water for one week. There were also methods of communicating with those outside the archives as well. As a result, the staff rested easy. Each of them had specific roles in the written plan, even though the staff working at the archives was small. The emergency plan had been executed perfectly. Isa and her team of assistants from the Avalor Science Academy had created the whole apparatus, connected to the levers, pedal, and pressure-sensitive areas. One question remained: Would these measures be enough to protect the archives? This was the first real test of these systems, although they had run through the process one time before as a practice run.

Meanwhile, the royal guards galloped through the streets, shouting "*Please* go to the designated shelters!"

Bells rang across the city, alerting people to this fact, if they couldn't hear the royal guards. Like those in the archives, the citizens complied, even with the impending danger. In an orderly fashion they moved to the underground bunkers, constructed for this very occasion. These bunkers had been filled with supplies of food, water, and forms of communication. Gabe flew back to the royal palace on the back of Migs. He found Elena standing in the

courtyard pacing and wearing a guard's uniform. Bits of a dazzling red dress were poking out below the bottom of the outfit. Dismounting, he saluted to Elena.

"Your Royal Highness, Operation PREECF is almost complete," he declared. While she was not used to anyone calling her that, she decided to go with it. Trifles over royal titles didn't matter at time like this.

"Lieutenant Núñez," she began, "please assemble the Royal Guard. Pull them back from the city. They must defend the palace at all costs."

Gabe saluted her once more. "It will be done." He walked away and gathered his fellow guards for this important mission. Rubbing their eyes, Adora, Catra, Zarya, and Kitty silently followed Elena, who wasn't aware of their presence. Not knowing exactly what was going on, they hoped she would tell them.

Although Elena could usually count on the Royal Guard to defend the city, she knew the enemy force would be *too big* for the guards to handle. Since the royal palace was separate from the city, almost towering above it, trying to defend both would stretch their ranks too thin. In order to defend the city, she had called in *favors* from kingdoms which had been friendly to Avalor over the years. Assembled in the city were the Enchania Winged Horse Legion, the Paraíso Mounted Brigade, and the Cariza Cannoneers. A detachment of sailors from Norberg, commanded by Naomi, were also *on standby* in the Avalor Bay if needed. While soldiers from kingdoms like Cordoba, Hectoria, Satu, would have assisted, they were not available. Simple folk from the Avaloran countryside had to be used instead. Rico Villalobos of the Royal Guard trained them. Together they formed the Enchania-Paraíso-Cariza-Avalor Unified Front (EPCA UF). Some jaquins from Vallestrella were on hand to defend the royal palace, as they saw themselves as the guardians of Avalor. Elena was grateful for all support she could get.

Standing in front of this amalgamated force from Enchania, Paraíso, Cariza, and the countryside of Avalor, she cleared her throat. Then she began speaking.

"I know that each of you may come from different walks of life, and places *near and far*. But we stand together today as the EPCA UF for a common goal: *to defend Avalor*. If we do not stop these mechanical menaces here, they will ravage the Ever Realm gleefully, kingdom by kingdom. We *cannot* give them that opportunity."

Raising her scepter, she shouted "FOR AVALOR!" Yelps and excitement could be heard from assembled soldiers. The cannoneers from Cariza rapidly moved to the cannons, taken from available ships in the harbor, throughout the city, and areas on the city's edges. This would, *hopefully*, protect the whole area from assault. The Paraíso mounted unit went through the city streets, while the Enchania winged horses' unit would be ready to strike the flying machines.

Zarya, Kitty, Adora, and Catra cheered. It caught Elena off guard.

"I…didn't expect to see you there," she sheepishly told them.

She thought that her guests would have stayed asleep after their late-night activities. She had predicted wrong. In any case, she hoped to enlist their assistance.

"Would you…like to help me?...my scepter drains my energy…so I can't use it for a long period of time."

Her newfound friends nodded. Adora blurted out "we will gladly fight alongside you…your wife…and uh, the rest of Avalor or whatever."

Catra shook her head at her girlfriend's antics. She always ended up saying things *before* fully thinking them out. Catra was still adjusting to her girlfriend and the fact she had *one* in the first place, something she had never thought possible in years past. Zarya and Kitty told Elena that they would operate their nearby ship and use it to fire upon the menacing sky vehicles.

All this good will from her friends inspired her more than anything else. She outstretched her arms and said one word: "hug?"

Her friends nodded. She embraced them, and they all nudged their heads together. Elena smiled. "We can do this…I believe in *you all*."

The whirring of the mechanical rotors grew louder. The fleet from Steamland came ever closer to Avalor City, minute by minute. Suddenly, the ships stopped and hovered in the air.

One ship came closer and blared a message: "I, the Arch-Druidess, commander of the Grand Steamland Armada, wish to have an audience with Elena Castillo Flores, Queen of Avalor."

Unsure what to do, she ran down to the wharf so she could speak to Naomi. She believed her wife could give her the advice she needed.

"Nomes, should I speak with her? I don't want to get captured or anything."

Naomi mulled it over. She did not want to lose a person she loved so dearly. Even so, she thought there was an opportunity to avoid bloodshed and knew that avoiding a conflict would save Elena *a lot of stress*.

She sighed. "Nena, you should at least hear what she has to say. I can come with you if you want."

Elena nodded. Although having Naomi by her side would have made her *more comfortable*, she feared that if they were both captured, Avalor would be in a weak position.

"While it would be nice to have you there," she began, "you should stay behind in case *something* happens to me."

While Naomi was sad to hear this, she understood Elena's reasoning. She could guess her wife's reasoning: she was the chancellor of Avalor, the second-most important person in the queendom, after all.

She motioned to a soldier the Enchania Winged Horse Legion. Adora, Catra, Zarya, and Kitty stood nearby, puzzled. They could not understand why she didn't ask them to give her a lift to this mysterious ship. Everyone, other than Adora, found the winged horses a little weird. The soldier bowed and offered her winged horse so Elena could fly to the nearby zeppelin, the biggest in the Grand Steamland Armada (GSA).

Elena accepted this graciously. "You will be forever thanked for *this sacrifice*."

While she had never flown on such a horse, she believed that it wouldn't be *any different* than riding a jacqin.

Adora tried to encourage her. She yelled, "you can do it, girl, I believe in you!"

Elena grinned back, forever grateful for such a *supportive friend*. Getting off the ground, the horse neighed as its wings flapped mightily. Bit by bit, it moved closer and closer to the deafening sound of whirring motors. Landing on a nearby platform, a woman dressed in a long purple gown with very exaggerated sleeves, greeted her. Although her expression was stern, and her heavy eyeliner, long nose, and purple lipstick seemed odd to Elena, the woman smiled. She bowed and introduced herself. She then asked "so…I presume you are Queen Elena Castillo Flores."

Nodding in agreement, she told Elena to come inside the zeppelin. She was led into a room where the outside sound was muffled.

Sitting at a chair at one end of the table, she instructed Elena to sit at the other end. Once Elena sat down, the Arch-Druidess cleared her throat.

"So here are the terms, Ms. Flores," she began. "We would like the diamond you took from the Steamland Archives and Museum."

Before Elena could say anything, she began to speak again. "If you *cannot* provide that, we would like you to submit yourself as *tribute* for your crimes against Steamland."

Shocked to hear these words, her facial expression turned to pure rage. She could not stand for such an absurd statement. While she had taken the diamond, it was an accident, something she thought the other woman would not understand. She got up and pushed aside her chair.

"Miss, I cannot accept your ridiculous terms," Elena shouted back. Composing herself, she made one simple request.

"If you and your fleet promise to not assault Avalor, we will honor that and not attack you."

She then outstretched her arm and then, hand in a gesture of friendship.

"Both our nations can sign a non-aggression pact, end this dispute, and *have mutually-beneficial relations*."

While any rational person would have accepted this, the Arch-Druidess was anything but reasonable. Her mind had been poisoned by the *evils of Alva* and his never-ending

propaganda about the "evils" of Avalor.

The Arch-Druidess chuckled. "Peace? Non-aggression? Your nation is anything but peaceful! Alva was right…you *ARE a tyrant*."

While Elena would have blasted this woman from her ship and into the air, causing her to fall to her death, she did not even want to give her *that satisfaction*. She wanted to show her that Avalor could beat such a technologically advanced armada. This would make her a model for others to follow, even inspiring people to *rise up* across Ever Realm against their oppressors, even if that wasn't her intention. Scoffing, she turned her back.

She slightly turned her head and remarked "so be it, Arch-Druidess."

She calmly marched out of the room and to her awaiting winged horse. As Elena flew away, the Arch-Druidess snarled. She had half expected an immediate surrender. Even so, she saw Elena's departure as a positive.

She hollered to the airship's gunners. "Fire at her. Shoot her down!"

Elena had *almost* reached the ground when bullets began whizzing by her. Due to her adapt flying skills, she dodged them all, and escaped without a scratch. She knew that using her scepter in a situation like this would be dangerous. It could open her to vulnerability. After waving to her wife, near the wharf at Avalor Bay, she landed softly in one of the city's courtyards. As the horse trotted back to the winged unit, she walked toward Isa, who was hiding in the shadows. She had hidden cannons which would fire upon the enemy with unmatched ferocity, by flicking a switch. She could also adjust their trajectory. That made them secret weapons... of sorts.

She murmured to her sister a few simple words: "fire the cannons, NOW!" Isa did so without a second thought.

Standing on the fountain's edge, Elena declared to the nearby soldiers "this is the fight you have all be waiting for. Prepare yourselves!"

While EPCA UF got ready for the incoming attack, so too did Zarya, Kitty, Catra, and Adora, mentally preparing for what was to come.

Kitty snickered. She put her arm around her girlfriend. She grumbled. "You know, I never thought we would be fighting so soon after leaving Drake City." Zarya concurred.

She did not want to battle anyone, but she respected Elena and Naomi *enough* that she felt it was their duty to defend Avalor. Were the Mysticons not bound to fight evil? That is what *she believed*.

"I don't mind combat…if it is for a noble cause," she told Kitty. Then she said something which gave her girlfriend pause.

"We owe Elena…and all Avalor…for letting us stay here at all!" While Kitty felt that she was giving their gracious hosts too much credit, she had to agree. The fact they could stay in the

royal palace, even though neither of them were not invited guests or part of the royal family, had been a surprise to them both. Kitty had half-expected they would be told to live in a house in Avalor City, but that did not happen.

"Let's get 'em, Z-Star! We have to show that love can triumph over hate."

Zarya rolled her eyes. She never had been a fan of such empty, meaningless statements, that made people *feel better about themselves.*

"Not sure what that *philosophical bs* means, but I'll stand by you no matter what…you…cat!"

Kitty didn't care if Zarya had slipped up and had accidentally called her a furry, cuddly animal. She saw this as a chance to be *even more adorable* than usual. She held up her hands like a cat, and roared.

Zarya laughed. "You always know *how* to cheer me up."

She couldn't help herself and blushed at her girlfriend's cuteness, her pinkish cheeks turning as red as tomatoes. Kitty pulled her arm. Soon both were giggling, holding hands, and skipping toward the pirate ship of the Pink Skulls, which they had renamed the *S.S. MoonBoon*.

Zarya shouted "Mysticon Ranger!" and transformed into her Mysticon form, complete with an energy bow, a blue shirt and pants, and a lighter blue cape. Other than her mask, the tips of her purple hair turned white. Kitty, at the wheel of the *S.S. Moonboon*, maneuvered the ship into position so they could fire a broadside of laser cannons at the enemy. Thanks to some *new tweaks* by her friend, a fellow Mysticon, Emerald Goldenbraid, back in Drake City, this was all controllable from the ship's helm. Zarya pulled her bow back and began to fire. She hoped that her arrows, which had an energy equal to lightning, would stun the pilots of these metal death machines. Then, the ship’s energy pulse cannons of the ship would finish them off.

Adora and Catra stood next to Elena in disbelief. Catra hissed and growled.

"They have a ship with huge cannons…and her lover can transform? All I have is this body… I wish…"

Adora cackled. She patted her girlfriend on the head. "That’s why you have me, silly!"

Grunting, Catra accepted this sullenly. Adora tried to perk her up.

"Don’t worry…you are *catr-ific*…one of the best fighters I know."

Her tan-skinned cheeks became warm. Breathing deeply, she linked arms with her girlfriend and snickered.

"Thanks…you dummy." She followed this up with: "Now let’s kick some butt!"

Pointing her sword into the sky, Adora positioned herself on the ground in a battle pose. Although it had been a while since she had transformed into She-Ra, she convinced herself

that it would be possible once again. Removing all distractions from her mind, she closed her eyes and hollered "For the honor of AVALOR!"

Elena was in awe, as was Catra *every time* her girlfriend turned into an attractive eight-foot-tall warrior. Usually she sported a long ponytail, long white pants, boots with golden wing decals, and a golden tiara. She also, usually, wore a blouse with a gold-outlined heart on the front, which was shorter in the front and longer in the back. This time, influenced by her time in Avalor, she wore something different. She had on reddish white pants, maroon boots, and a reddish-white blouse to contrast the color of her girlfriend's clothes. There were intricate designs on her pants, boots, and even blouse. They were modeled after the ones she saw Elena and Naomi had on their clothes, since she had *a bit* of a crush on both of them. Catra was a bit astonished by this look, as she had come accustomed to the usual outfit, but decided to accept it anyway.

Standing next to Elena, she turned to her. "Are you ready?" Grinning like a Cheshire cat, she declared "I'm *born ready*, baby."

Each of them wielded their weapons, Adora with her magical sword, Elena with her royal scepter, and Catra with a sword for hand-to-hand combat. She also had a whip she had won in the Crimson Waste. She considered it one of her most prized possessions. Elena, her newfound friends, allied soldiers from nearby kingdoms, and royal guards had a challenge in fending off this huge armada. More than anyone, Elena was willing to go to the end of the line for Avalor and everyone inside the Queendom, including her sister and her wife.

End Notes

I know the part about Mateo is a little bit of a cheap shot, but I promise you that Mateo WILL come back in a future story, there were just a lot of characters to deal with here. The part about the Royal Avaloran Archives in this story is loosely based on information about emergency preparation shared by the National Archives, Smithsonian Institution Archives, IFLA, Minnesota Historical Society and the article by David Alexander on the subject. Also see Elizabeth Shepard's "Compiling A Disaster Plan for Archival Collections," Catherine Moeller's "Disaster Management in Archives," the National Archives' "Vital Records and Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery" resource and the Society of American Archivists' Annotated Resources. What I did kind of ended up like a Rube Goldberg machine, I suppose. The "Ever Realm" page on the Elena of Avalor wiki, the "Enchancia," "Paraíso," "Cariza," "Norberg," "Avalor Palace," "Avalor Bay," and "Avaloran Royal Guard" pages on the Sofia the First wiki, and the "Arch-Druidess" page on the Disenchantment Wiki, "Zarya Moonwolf" and "Ranger Bow and Arrows" pages on the Mysticons wiki, and "Adora" and "Catra" pages on the She-Ra and the Princesses of Power wiki. PREECF means Preparation Elena Castillo Flores or something. I probably thought more about that when coming up with the term at first than later. Oops.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!